

## Preparing For The Future

*A look at Mohawk's new CAD/CAM lab.*

**T**he proliferation of computer technology has almost everyone scrambling to keep up.

Just ask the Mohawk College students and Alumni who are taking courses in CAD/CAM (Computer-Aided Design/Computer-Aided Manufacturing).

In the fall of 1982, the College unveiled its \$500,000 CAD/CAM lab and it quickly became one of the busiest places at the Fennell Campus.

Set up with the help of a grant from the Ontario Government's Board of Industrial Leadership (BILD) Program, the lab is used to teach full and part-time students how to use the CALMA CAD/CAM System which experts predict will be commonplace in industry in the very near future.

Jal Wadia of the College's Architecture Technology Department teaches CAD/Cam courses to full and part-time students. He says the courses are very popular with part-time students because they need to be trained on the equipment which could soon be in their workplaces.

"People have to retrain themselves," he says. "Traditional drafting will always be there but it is slowly dwindling away just like our old sliderulers."

Productivity, he suggests, is the principal reason that CAD/CAM technology is becoming so popular in industry.

"A proficient person can produce much faster and produce a much greater volume of work and it is also much more accurate."

Cost is also a factor in the spread of the technology, said Mr. Wadia. Unlike most things these days, he said, the cost of CAD/CAM equipment is decreasing.

Mr. Wadia predicts that in five years, CAD/CAM will be the primary design, drafting and automated manufacturing technology tool in the workplace and that presents Mohawk College with an important challenge.

Despite budgetary restraints, he says, the College should move quickly to acquire equipment and offer programs that will enable students to keep up with the

rapid advances in CAD/CAM technology.

Mr. Wadia is helping the College prepare to meet this challenge. He has submitted a proposal for a CAD/CAM certificate program to the College Administration and is anxiously awaiting its approval.

Enrolment in the six Part-Time Studies CAD/CAM courses is further proof that there is a high demand for training in this area. The courses which currently cost \$90.00 each can accommodate 16 students each and Mr. Wadia says they fill up very quickly when registration opens.

For many of the students, including past graduates of the College's Architecture, Mechanical, Electronics and Civil Engineering Technology programs, the prime motivation is job security.

"Age doesn't seem to stop them," says Mr. Wadia. "The jobs and security are the reasons the people are taking it."

Two Mohawk Alumni who are taking Part-Time Studies courses on CAD/CAM agree with that assessment.

Joe Kucsma is a drafting supervisor with Hamilton-Wentworth Region's Engineering Services Department. Starting in Part-Time Studies at the Hamilton Institute of Technology in the mid-Sixties, Mr. Kucsma received his Civil Engineering Technology diploma from Mohawk in 1977. He also holds a certificate from the Ontario Management Development Program and a Civil Technology certificate from Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto.

While the Region has yet to install CAD/CAM equipment in its drafting offices, the day isn't far off, Mr. Kucsma suggested, and he doesn't want to be left behind.

An internal management committee is looking at the equipment, he said, and, as a drafting supervisor with 29 years' experience, he's got to be ready whenever the decision to purchase is made.

"I have to be updated with the latest technologies in drafting," he said, "and this (CAD/CAM) is the drafting of the future."

The handwriting is also on the wall for Steve Gdyczynski, a 1977 graduate of Mohawk's Architectural Technology Program.

He is employed as a Projects Coordinator by Lanca Contracting Ltd. in Brantford. The implications for him of CAD/CAM technology are obvious and he predicts his employer will have the equipment in five to 10 years.

"I feel it's the thing of the future," he said. "It's something I need to get into now and stay on top of."

The speed with which the technology is spreading in his industry is another reason that Mr. Gdyczynski is taking a Part-Time Studies course in it now.

"It was something that you heard about two years ago as being far off in the future," he said, "but now it seems that just about everybody will have it in two years."



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